



## Florida House of Representatives

### HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE

402 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, Florida  
32399-1300

**Adam Hasner**  
Majority Leader

322 The Capitol  
(850) 488-1993

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 11, 2010

**CONTACT:** Joseph Agostini  
(850) 488-1993

## **CRIST'S VETO BRINGS TAXPAYER FUNDED ABORTIONS TO FLORIDA FOR FIRST TIME**

*-“You Can Trust Me” Crist told Pro-Life Floridians-*

**TALLAHASSEE, FL** – Today, with his veto of House Bill (HB) 1143, Governor Charlie Crist chose to force Florida taxpayers to pay for elective abortions for the first time.

Crist, who has repeatedly declared that pro-life Floridians could trust him to support their efforts, went back on his word and vetoed the only major legislation dealing with abortion presented to him during his term as governor.

Recent federal health care legislation gave states the opportunity to opt-out of federal provisions using tax dollars to be used to subsidize insurance plans that fund elective abortions. Provisions to ensure taxpayer dollars were not used to pay for elective abortions were contained in HB 1143, and tens of thousands of Floridians, including U.S. Senator George LeMieux (R-Florida)-who was appointed to the U.S. Senate by Crist- Attorney General Bill McCollum and Crist's Lieutenant Governor Jeff Kottkamp asked for Crist to sign those measures.

Restricting the use of taxpayer dollars for abortions has been the policy of our nation for over three decades. In 1976, an overwhelming Democratic-controlled United States House of Representatives passed the Hyde Amendment, which barred publicly-funded abortions.

Florida has never offered taxpayer funded elective abortions. Exceptions for cases of rape or incest, or situations where the life of the mother is in danger are specifically provided for in both the Hyde amendment and in HB 1143.

*-more-*

HB 1143 also contained provisions designed to streamline the Agency for Health Care Administration and save Florida taxpayers an estimated \$1.3 million annually by reducing state administrative costs and Medicaid expenditures.

Additionally, HB 1443 also established as the state's policy that a person may not be compelled by federal, state or local governments to purchase health insurance or services. The federal legislation that allows taxpayer dollars to subsidize abortions also contained provisions mandating that every individual be forced to purchase health care insurance or be fined by the Internal Revenue Service.

The legislation supported the efforts of Attorney General Bill McCollum to preserve Floridians' independence to make their own health care purchasing decisions.

The legislation also ensured that a woman had the right to see an ultrasound, if she so chose, before making the decision to have an abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy. Such ultrasounds are already required in the second and third trimesters before an abortion can be performed. Additionally, according to a 2008 legislative analysis, 82% of abortion providers in the state of Florida already require an ultrasound prior to performing first trimester abortions, and the ultrasound is already included in the cost of the abortion procedure.

The ultrasound would be used to determine vital information relating to the procedure such as confirming the pregnancy, determining gestational age, and checking for any special circumstances such as an ectopic pregnancy. For over 80% of Florida abortion providers, such ultrasounds are already standard medical practice. This legislation sought to give women the information they need to make an informed decision while at the same time improving quality of care and safety.

A woman who does not wish to view her ultrasound or listen to an oral description has the specific right to decline by signing a simple form. The bill exempted cases of rape, incest and situations where the life of the mother is in jeopardy.

###